

February 17th, 2022

Bill No. 5033, An act addressing the needs of food-insecure students at public institutions of higher education.

To Senator Slap and members of the and distinguished members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee:

My name is Julia Mazur, I am a student at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, from Newington, CT. I stand in support of Bill No. 5033, An act addressing the needs of food-insecure students at public institutions of higher education. I am a Junior undergraduate student and I have lived on campus my Freshman and Junior years. I am vegan and have been for three years now and I find that it is extremely difficult to find a selection of foods that I can eat that are nutritious at cafes and dining halls. There are vegan friendly dining halls available, however there are an abundance of days where only one dining hall on the whole campus will provide food that I would be able to eat that I consider a nutritious and balanced meal. Options like sauteed kale and rice for dinner every day will not provide a sufficient level of nutrients to be considered a healthy meal. Crossroads cafe provides great vegan options for lunchtime, but closes at 3pm everyday and is not open on the weekends. Crossroads is one of the only cafes that provides vegan protein options for UConn students, while the rest of the cafes only have one vegan option available and do not provide the right nutrients required for a balanced meal. These limitations provide a setback for when I can eat and what I can eat, as I am completely dependent on UConn's dining facilities for food. I cannot afford groceries this semester and I have utilized USG's Husky Market program in order to provide myself with produce, vegan snacks, and essential nutrients that I need in my diet every day.

Without a nutritious and well balanced diet, my peers and I will experience fatigue and so-called "burnout" during the semester. The food that you eat has a huge impact on your physical and mental health and UConn should provide a variety of foods so that people have options when choosing their meals. The bill proposes that the
With regard to general food accessibility, those who claim not enough variety and difficulty have higher instances of low food security. This comes out of a report submitted by the Board of Trustees in 2020 in response to Special Act 1925 *An act concerning food insecure students at public institutions*. This bill was from a few years ago and UConn needs to give a survey out about food insecurity on campus. This survey would provide an outlook on how students are feeling about the services that UConn is providing and would give feedback to UConn about what they are doing wrong and what they can improve on.

I support Bill No. 5033 in order for UConn to address the students' needs and frustrations regarding food insecurity. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

Julia Mazur

CLAS Senator for Undergraduate Student Government at UConn

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